

Quake survivors remarry in China

by UPI

BEIJING -- Twenty couples who met after losing their spouses in a 2008 earthquake were married in China in a group wedding, officials in Sichuan Province said.

The service Sunday, funded by the local government, was conducted according to the customs of the Qiang ethnic group in Beichuan County, which lost two-thirds of its population in the May 12, 2008 quake.

Each couple planted a sapling to symbolize caring and happiness, Xinhua, China's state-run news agency, reported.

The couples included Zhang Li, a primary school teacher, and Tang Jirao, the deputy head of Leigu Town, who said the quake left him afraid to stay alone.

"I kept myself busy so that I would be exhausted and fall asleep," Tang said. "I even thought that my life would be ending that way, till I was introduced to Zhang Li by my family members."

The magnitude-8 quake killed more than 69,000 people, injured more than 374,000 and left millions homeless.

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